

## **I AM: Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life: Lesson Summary**

I'm horrible at following directions or instructions. I'd like to say that it's a result of my struggles to focus or the busyness of my mind. But, if I'm really honest, I most often think that I don't need them. Like a little child I believe that "I can do it." I don't need help. More often than not the reality is that I do need help. Sadly, this mentality often works its way into my life in Christ. I march forward in my own strength believing that "I can do it." Scripture is clear however, that just doesn't work. When Jesus says that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, He is making a definitive statement that He is the only Way back to the Father.

As we continue our "I AM" series we must remind ourselves that Jesus is not simply comparing Himself to these things. Jesus isn't saying that He is like the bread of life or light, but instead, that He is the bread of life and He is light. These statements would have been shocking to His Jewish audience because they were declarations that He is God. He was and is the I AM. In order to understand the gravity of Jesus' profession that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life I believe we must consider three things. We must consider the holiness of God, the exclusivity of Christ, and the solution to our separation from our Heavenly Father.

When you consider the holiness of God it should overwhelm us. The glory, majesty, justice, mercy, and power of God are just a few words to describe His otherness. When Moses asks God who he should tell sent him the only description sufficient was that he was "I Am who I Am." There was nothing to compare Himself to. Why is an understanding of the holiness of God so essential to our understanding the gravity of Jesus' declaration that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? Because we are not holy! We chose something other than the I AM. The stain of our sin in the Garden resulted in our separation from a holy God. As a result, we need a way back if we are to have any hope of restoration with the Father.

I'm convinced that humanity spends their entire lives trying to get back to the perfection that was lost in the Garden. We long for peace, fulfillment, joy, and rest. Because of this, we look for any way back despite how destructive or insufficient they are. Addictions, relationships, success, and prosperity promise a return to purpose yet they fail. There has to be something to restore us. If not, then we are destined to suffer the tireless pursuit of disappointment and death. This is why the exclusivity of Christ is so necessary. Jesus is the only Way, the only Truth, and the only Life. There is no other way back to the Father, back to perfection, and back to peace and rest. That's not a popular answer in today's culture. In a time when the perception is that there are many ways, many truths, and many places of peace, speaking of exclusivity is not an option. However, that doesn't make it any less true. The solution to our wandering is Christ.

Consider Leviticus 16 and the sacrificial system and process described in order to enter into the presence of the Holy God, the I AM. The details, or instructions, are overwhelming. They speak to the insurmountable separation between fallen man and a perfect God. These rituals required by the priest were simply a picture of an intermediary that was necessary. The blood of bulls and goats was never intended to be sufficient to save us, but instead, a picture of Who's blood and life would be sufficient to save. When Jesus declares that He was the Way the, the Truth, and the Life He is acknowledging that His blood is the only Way back to the Father, that He is the very embodiment of Truth, and that newness of Life only comes through Him. Are you dependent on Jesus as the only Way back to the Father, or are you trying to find a way back on your own? Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is our only hope of restoration with our Father.

### **Discussion:**

- 1) How have you seen the exclusivity of Jesus questioned in today's culture? How might you or someone else struggle with the idea that Jesus is the ONLY way?
- 2) Jesus declares that He is the Truth? What truth does our culture pursue? What truth do you pursue?
- 3) What are some ways that you still live as if sacrifices are necessary to enter into God's presence? How do you live in a way in which Jesus' sacrifice was no enough?